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exerts a reactive force against said member when said member is moved in a first direction along said rod, said spring component being compressed in a direction parallel to the movement of said member when said member is moved in said first direction to exert said reactive force, and a spacer which interacts with said member to limit advancement of said member in said first direction.

Remarks

The drawings and specification have been amended, new Fig. 9 has been added, claims 3, 10, 17, 19, 21 and 22 have been amended, and new claims 23-29 have been added. Copies of the amended portions of the specification and the amended claims illustrating the changes thereto accompany this amendment. Review and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

The drawings are objected to due to the presence of the bordering and the legend. Accordingly, new Figs. 1-3 which do not include the bordering and the legend are submitted herewith, and it is requested that new Figs. 1-3 be substituted for originally-filed Figs. 1-3.

The drawings are objected to for failing to disclose the "lever mechanism" of claim 14. Accordingly, new Fig. 9 illustrates one embodiment of the lever mechanism. The "Brief Description of the Drawings" section, as well as the description of the lever mechanism in the specification, have been amended to incorporate the addition of Fig. 9. It is submitted that the lever mechanism is described at the last full paragraph of page 4 of the original-filed specification and therefore new Fig. 9 does not add any new matter.

The specification has been amended to remove reference number 46 at page 4, line 20 as suggested in the Office action.

As requested in the Office action, applicant hereby confirms its election to prosecute the invention of Group II.

Claims 17 has been amended to address the 35 U.S.C. §112 rejection by changing "in a" to "is a." Claims 19, 21 and 22 have been amended to change "the advancement" to

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"advancement" as suggested in the Office action. The Office action indicates that the phrase "can be" of claims 19, 21 and 22 is allegedly vague and indefinite on the basis that it is not clear whether the relevant features are able to perform this function. However, it is submitted that the phrase "can be" does not render the claim indefinite. In fact, the wording "can be" quite clearly specifies that the relevant features are able to perform the specified function, and sets forth a positive, well-defined limitation regarding the capabilities of the claimed invention. Thus, it is submitted that claims 19, 21 and 22 are not indefinite.

Claims 2-14, 16-19, 21 and 22 are rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 2,563,120 to Klingens et al. Amended claim 19 specifies that the slicer body includes an anchor component, and specifies that the spacer interacts with the nut and the anchor component to limit advancement of the nut in the first direction. Claim 19 also specifies that the anchor component remains fixed when said motor pivots.

In contrast, the Klingens reference does not disclose the anchor component and spacer of claim 19. The component that has been construed as the "spacer" of the Klingens reference (nut 63), in the Office action's interpretation, engages and/or interacts with what has been construed as the "anchor component" (strap 53). However, the strap 53 pivots when the motor of that device pivots, and thus does not remain fixed when the motor pivots. In fact, each of the nut 66, spring 65, nut 63, strap 53, bolt 61 and stirrup 59 of the Klingens reference appear to pivot with the motor when the motor is pivoted. As noted at page 4, lines 18-20 of the originally-filed specification, the use of an anchor component that is fixed provides a high degree of control over the spring deflection and therefore the tension in the belt. Thus, it is submitted that amended claim 19 defines over the Klingens reference.

Claim 21 has been amended in a manner similar to claim 19, and thus claim 21 similarly defines over the Klingens reference. Claim 3, which depends from claim 21, has been amended to accommodate the amendment to claim 21.

Claim 11 depends from claim 21 and specifies that the spacer receives the spring therein. This subject matter is not shown in the Klingens reference.

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Claim 10 depends from claim 21 and has been amended to specify that the rod slidably extends through the spacer. It is submitted that this amendment does not add new matter because the originally filed specification discloses that the spacer may be a hollow tube (page 3, line 17 of the originally-filed specification), and Figs. 4-7 clearly disclose that the spacer 44 loosely receives the rod 34 therein. Thus it is submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate that the rod 34 slidably extends through the spacer 44.

In contrast, what has been construed as a “spacer” of the device of the Klingens reference is in fact a nut threaded onto a rod. Thus, additional time and effort is required in order to mount the nut 63 of the Klingens reference onto the rod, as opposed to the slidable arrangement of claim 10.

Claim 23 depends from claim 21 and specifies that the spring is a coil spring, which is not shown in the Klingens reference.

Claim 24 depends from claim 21 and specifies that the spacer is trapped between the anchor component and the member when the spacer limits the advancement of the member in said first direction. This subject matter is disclosed at page 3, line 27-page 4, line 5 of the originally-filed specification, and shown in originally-filed Fig. 5. In contrast, the nut 63 of the Klingens reference is not trapped between an anchor component and a member, but is instead threaded onto a component.

New independent claim 28 specifies that the spacer is slidably received on the rod, and new dependent claim 29 specifies that the spring is received in the spacer. As noted above, the Klingens reference does not disclose the subject matter of these claims.

The rejection of claim 22 is traversed. Although not limited by the drawings, the subject matter of claim 22 is shown in Fig. 7. Claim 22 specifies that the belt tensioning device of the slicer of claim 22 includes an arm coupled to the pulley, the arm being movable along the rod, and a spring that exerts a reactive force against the arm. Claim 22 also specifies that the spacer interacts with the arm to limit advancement of the arm in the first direction. In contrast, the Klingens reference lacks these elements specified in claim 22.

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New claims 25, 26 and 27 depend from claim 22 and specify that the spacer is slidable along the rod, the spacer receives the spring therein, and that the spring is a coil spring, respectively, which further distinguish over the Klingens reference.

New claim 30 specifies that the spring component is compressed in a direction parallel to the movement of the member when the member is moved in the first direction to exert the reactive force. In contrast, the leaf spring of the Klingens reference is not compressed in a direction parallel to the movement of the member to exert the reactive force.

Thus, in sum, it is submitted that each of the independent claims 19, 21, 22 and 28 distinguish over the Klingens reference, and that several dependent claims further distance the claimed inventions from the cited references. Accordingly, it is submitted that the application is in a condition for allowance and a formal notice thereof is respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees required, including the fee for an extension of time, or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 20-0809.

Respectfully submitted,



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MARKED-UP COPIES OF AMENDED PARAGRAPHS OF SPECIFICATION

Brief Description of the Drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a slicer including the belt tensioning device of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a bottom view of the slicer of Fig. 1, with part of the slicer removed to reveal part of the belt tensioning device of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is a partial cutaway bottom view of the slicer of Fig. 1, showing part of the belt tensioning device of the present invention;

Fig. 4 is a schematic representation of the belt tensioning device of the present invention, shown in an un-tensioned state;

Fig. 5 is a schematic representation of the device of Fig. 3, shown in a fully tensioned state;

Fig. 6 is a schematic representation of the belt tensioning device of the present invention shown in an alternate location and in its fully tensioned state;

Fig. 7 is an alternate embodiment of the belt tensioning device of the present invention shown in its un-tensioned state; [and]

Fig. 8 is a perspective, partial cutaway view of a mixer including the belt tensioning device of the present invention[.]; and

Fig. 9 is a schematic representation of an alternate embodiment of the belt tensioning device of the present invention.

First and second full paragraphs of page 4:

The length of the spacer 44 and the spring constant of the spring 46 can be selected to ensure that the desired tension of the belt 30 is consistently and repeatedly achieved each time the belt tensioning device 11 is utilized. Accordingly, the belt tensioning device 11 of the present invention tightens the belt 30 to a specified tension without requiring the use of gauges

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or other special tools, and the belt tensioning device 11 need only be assembled in the above-described manner to ensure that the belt 30 is properly tensioned. Furthermore, the spring 46 of the present invention is located between the wall 38 and the washer 50. Because the wall 38 is a fixed component, the belt tensioning device 11 provides a high degree of control over the spring deflection [46], and thereby the tension in the belt 30. Additionally, the belt tensioning device 11 minimizes bending moments in the system.

In an alternate embodiment, as shown in Fig. 9, the arm 32 may comprise a variety of lever arms ([not shown] e.g. 90, 92) to change the leverage of the arm 32 on the rotation of the motor 20 (and thereby optimize the force on the belt 30), or to change the moment arm ratios in the system. Furthermore, a variety of lever arms may be used to change the rotation of the motor 20; that is, a lever arm may be provided to rotate the motor in the opposite direction of arrow A when the nut 42 is tightened down.

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MARKED-UP COPIES OF AMENDED CLAIMS

3. (Twice Amended) The slicer of claim 21 wherein said pulley is located adjacent to [an] said anchor component [having] which has an opening formed therein, and wherein said rod extends through said opening.

10. (Twice Amended) The slicer of claim 21 wherein said rod slidably extends through said spacer.

17. (Twice Amended) The slicer of claim 16 wherein said rod [in] is a threaded rod and said member is a nut threaded onto said rod.

19. (Amended) A slicer comprising:
a slicer body having an anchor component;
a rotatable blade coupled to said slicer body;
a reciprocal tray for bringing a food product into and out of contact with said blade;
a motor for driving said blade, said motor being pivotable and having an output pulley operatively connected to said blade; and
a belt tensioning device for said motor such that a belt passed around said output pulley can be tightened to a predetermined tension, the belt tensioning device including a threaded rod coupled to said motor, said rod being located adjacent an anchor component, a nut threaded onto said threaded rod, a spring located adjacent said nut that exerts a reactive force against said nut when said nut is threaded in a first direction along said rod to cause said motor to pivot, and a spacer which [engages] interacts with said nut and said anchor component to limit [the] advancement of said nut in said first direction, and wherein said anchor component remains fixed when said motor pivots.

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21. (Amended) A slicer comprising:
a slicer body having an anchor component;
a rotatable blade coupled to said slicer body;
a reciprocal tray for bringing a food product into and out of contact with said blade;
a motor for driving said blade, said motor being pivotable and having an output pulley
operatively connected to said blade; and
a belt tensioning device for said motor such that a belt passed around said output pulley
can be tightened to a predetermined tension, the belt tensioning device including a rod coupled
to said pulley, a member coupled to and movable along said rod, a spring that exerts a reactive
force against said member when said member is moved in a first direction along said rod, and
a spacer which [engages] interacts with said member an said anchor component to limit [the]
advancement of said member in said first direction, and wherein said anchor component
remains fixed when said motor pivots.

22. (Amended) A slicer comprising:
a slicer body;
a rotatable blade coupled to said slicer body;
a reciprocal tray for bringing a food product into and out of contact with said blade;
a motor for driving said blade, said motor being pivotable and having an output pulley
operatively connected to said blade; and
a belt tensioning device for said motor such that a belt passed around said output pulley
can be tightened to a predetermined tension, the belt tensioning device including a rod, an arm
coupled to said pulley, said arm being movable along said rod, a spring that exerts a reactive
force against said arm when said arm is moved in a first direction along said rod, and a spacer
which [engages] interacts with said arm to limit [the] advancement of said arm in said first
direction.